TRAVEL PROCEDURES 2018

Issued by: Chief Financial Officer; Chief Human Resources Officer
Date: 11 December 2017
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Signature: Wayne Andrews; Karen Haywood

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1 Purpose and application

(1) These procedures are to give effect to the Travel Policy 2018 (“the policy”).

(2) These procedures apply to any person:

(a) undertaking travel for or on behalf of the University, regardless of the source of funding; or

(b) whose travel is funded by the University.

Note: This may, in appropriate circumstances, include travel for visiting scholars, recruitment interviews and relocation of new appointees where the travel is funded by the University.

(3) Except for clause 4, these procedures do not apply to any person on a Special Studies Program.

Note: See Special Studies Program Policy 2015.

2 Commencement

These procedures commence on 1 January 2018.

3 Interpretation

(1) Words and phrases used in these procedures and not otherwise defined in this document have the meanings they have in the policy.

DFAT means the Commonwealth Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

domestic travel means travel in Australia and New Zealand.

travel and expense management system means the online travel and expense management system used to record all University travel activities, including an itinerary, emergency contact details, reason for travel, travel expenses and a travel diary.

insurer means the University nominated insurer for travel purposes.

international travel means travel other than domestic travel.

remote area means an area more than 100 kilometres from the nearest urban area, where:

• medical or emergency assistance is more than 60 minutes away;
• communication is unreliable;
• there is little or no traffic;
• vegetation is dense;
• there are rocky outcrops; or
• it is a marine environment.

**risk approval matrix**
means the risk approval matrix which is set out in Schedule One to the policy.

**RiskLine**
means the travel advisory service used in the travel and expense management system.

**TMC**
means the University’s preferred travel management company, currently Travel Partner.

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**PART 1  BEFORE TRAVEL**

**4  Requesting travel**

(1) All travellers must submit a travel request in the travel and expense management system prior to undertaking the travel.

(2) Travel requests must be approved prior to:

(a) undertaking travel for domestic travel;

(b) payment of airfares for international travel.

(3) All travel requests for approval must include the following information:

(a) primary purpose of the travel;

(b) outline of the proposed work activities and outcomes of the travel, attaching supporting documentation;

(c) travel details including planned itinerary, departure and arrival locations and dates;

   (i) The planned itinerary must include any personal days of leave planned with the business travel.

(d) business cost estimate including fares, accommodation and other travel costs;

   (i) The business cost estimate must not include personal or private travel costs that will be paid personally by the traveller.

   (ii) If the trip involves personal travel for which the traveller is required by subclause 12(5) of the policy to pay 50% of the airfare, a comment must be included in the travel request that the payment is to be split.

(e) details of the booking channels selected, being through the online booking tool, the TMC or a non-preferred channel (an external third party);

(f) funding source, including the responsibility centre and project code and the planned allocation of costs;
(g) approval for business class travel, if applicable, in accordance with clause 10;
(h) where relevant, a copy of the fieldwork safety plan;
(i) for international travel to “high risk” and “very high risk” destinations, the:
   (i) travel risk assessment; and
   (ii) confirmation of travel insurance from internal Audit (see clause 23(3)).
   Note: Refer to Schedule One to the policy.

4 Travel requests which are part of the Special Studies Program must be:
   (a) recorded in the travel and expense management system to ensure the
       traveller will receive automatic travel alerts;
   (b) booked using the University’s appointed travel management company; and
   (c) paid for using personal funds.
   Note: The University will contribute towards travel costs and living expenses up to the
   amounts specified in the Special Studies Program Procedures 2015.

5 Approving travel

   (1) Travel requests submitted through the travel and expense management system will
       be forwarded automatically to the traveller’s manager for review and approval.
       Note: Refer to subclause 15(2) of the policy for travel approver responsibilities.

   (2) The traveller, manager or approver may also forward a travel request to other
       approvers in appropriate cases, such as for research grant approvals.

   (3) If the likely cost of the travel exceeds the manager’s financial delegation, the travel
       request will be forwarded automatically to the relevant financial delegate (specified
       in the University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority – Administrative Functions)
       Rule 2016), for review and approval.

   (4) If international travel involves fieldwork, the travel request will be forwarded
       automatically to the Head of school for review and approval.

   (5) If an international travel destination has been assessed as “high risk” or “very high
       risk”, the travel request will be forwarded automatically to the relevant risk approver
       for review and approval.
       Note: Refer to subclauses 10(4) and 10(5) of the policy.

   (6) Managers and approvers must decline, or request further information about, any
       travel request which does not meet the requirements of clause 4 of these
       procedures.

   (7) Exceptions to the general principles of the policy, including additional travel
       expenses such as business class travel, may be approved in exceptional
       circumstances by the relevant:
       (a) Deputy Vice-Chancellor;
       (b) Vice-Principal; or
       (c) Dean.

   (8) Exceptional circumstances include, but are not limited to:
(a) medical requirements;
(b) where more than eight hours of air travel is required and the traveller is required to commence work less than 18 hours after landing;

Note: Travellers should consider travelling a day earlier where possible, to have sufficient time to rest before commencing work.

(c) strenuous travel requirements (e.g. multiple transit periods);
(d) an approved workplace adjustment in accordance with the Disability Inclusion Action Plan;
(e) requirements of an employment contract;
(f) sponsored travel (e.g. travel paid for by a conference provider);
(g) an explicit external funding arrangement.

6 Booking travel

(1) Travellers are responsible for organising all travel details, including applying for visas or work permits, booking flights and accommodation.

Note: Refer to clause 11 of the policy.

(2) The process for booking travel is summarised in the flow chart in Schedule One to these procedures.

(a) In exceptional circumstances where travel is booked through a non-preferred booking channel, the traveller must enter their itinerary details on the travel request in the travel management system.

(3) Further details of the travel booking process are available on the staff intranet.

Note: For student and non-staff travel refer to the 'Quick reference to booking travel' for the booking process.

(4) The following steps are required prior to domestic travel.

(a) The traveller obtains written approval to travel from their manager.
   (i) The traveller must retain a copy of the approval and be able to provide the documentation if requested.

(b) The traveller books and pays for flights, accommodation and other arrangements.

(c) The traveller completes (and obtains approval of) a travel request in the travel and expense management system, including a cash advance if required.

(d) The traveller completes (and obtains approval of) a leave booking through myHRonline for any associated leave.

(5) The following steps are required prior to international travel.

(a) The traveller completes (and obtains approval of) a travel request in the travel and expense management system, including a cash advance if required.

(b) The traveller books and pays for flights, accommodation and other travel arrangements through the TMC, or alternative supplier where specifically permitted under clause 11 of the policy.
(c) The traveller completes (and obtains approval of) a leave booking through myHRonline for any leave during the trip.

7 Booking flights

(1) Travellers may book the lowest logical fare to meet the purpose of their travel.

(2) Travellers carrying University equipment likely to exceed the standard baggage allowance should advise the TMC to arrange for costs to be waived wherever possible.

(3) If travel includes private charter flights, travellers must notify Internal Audit prior to booking to ensure appropriate insurance is available.

Note: Refer to clause 7 of the policy.

8 Booking accommodation

(1) Travellers must book accommodation at properties (listed in preferred order):
   (a) for which the University has negotiated preferred rates;
   (b) which offer a government rate;
   (c) for which the TMC has negotiated special rates; or
   (d) which offer the cheapest, appropriate, available accommodation at the same level of safety.

(2) Travellers should only use non-preferred suppliers for accommodation if there are appropriate reasons for doing so. For example, travellers attending conferences may use accommodation suggested by the conference organisers.

9 Booking vehicles

(1) Travellers should consider using public transport if it is a safe and economical means of travelling locally.

(2) Travellers hiring vehicles must book through a booking channel:
   (a) for which the University has negotiated preferred rates; or
   (b) for which the TMC has negotiated special rates.

(3) The type of vehicle hired should be:
   (a) appropriate for the travel involved; and
   (b) normally be standard or economy class.

(4) The vehicle hire must include comprehensive insurance with lowest excess.

Note: Full details of the University's insurance policies are available from Internal Audit.

(5) The use of private vehicles must be approved by the relevant manager prior to travel, and costs should be reasonable.
   (a) Private vehicles used for work purposes must be of roadworthy condition, comprehensively insured and well maintained.
   (b) The University does not provide insurance for damage or theft of private vehicles used for work purposes.
(c) Travellers using private vehicles for University travel are entitled to claim the Motor Vehicle Usage Allowance Rate, limited to 5000 kilometres per vehicle per year.

(6) Travellers using taxis or other transport suppliers must pay for them using corporate credit card, cab charge or as a cash claim.

10 Additional travel expenses

Additional travel expenses which must be approved under clause 7(6) of the policy include:

(a) premium economy or business class travel; and

Note: Complete the Travel approval for business or premium economy class form where appropriate.

(b) spouse, partner and dependants accompanying the traveller.

11 Changes to travel plans

(1) Travellers must continually assess their circumstances before and during travel and make changes to their itinerary and approval as required.

(2) Travellers must communicate their final travel itinerary to their manager, and keep their manager informed of any changes.

(3) If it is necessary to make changes to travel arrangements, the traveller must liaise with the TMC to minimise consequent costs to the University. In particular, the traveller must inform the TMC as soon as possible of:

   (a) details of the (proposed) change;
   (b) the reasons for the change; and
   (c) details of any likely additional costs.

(4) All changes to approved travel (including budgets, travel destinations and duration of travel absence) must be approved by the initial approver if the duration changes by more than one week.

(5) The traveller must update the travel and expense management system so that their travel itinerary and contact details are correct.

12 Allowable travel and other expenses

(1) The University will pay for approved reasonable business costs for travel, including fares, accommodation, meals, conferences and incidental expenses. A list of non-allowable expenses is provided in the Non-Allowable Expense Procedures 2018.

(2) The following are not usually allowable expenses:

   (a) non-arrival charges at the fault of the traveller;
   (b) in-house movies;
   (c) minibar costs, except for bottled water.
13 Travel diary

(1) Travellers must complete a travel diary for any trip of six nights or more and attach it within the travel and expense management system. 
   Note: The diary is a requirement under taxation law.

(2) A travel diary shows the nature of each work or business activity, where and when it took place, the duration of the activity and the date the entry was made.

(3) The travel request prepared in the travel and expense management system will provide travel destination details required for the travel diary.

14 FBT (Fringe Benefits Tax)

(1) Travel costs associated with an overnight stay away from the traveller’s normal residence are not generally subject to FBT, provided that:
   (a) the travel diary requirements of the Australian Taxation Office are complied with in the travel and expense management system; and
   (b) the private days on a trip are less than 30% of the total days away, in which case the trip will be classed as being materially for business.
   Note: Refer to clause 12 in the policy.

15 Payment methods

(1) Travel expenses may be paid by a variety of methods, including:
   (a) corporate credit card;
   (b) payment to preferred suppliers;
   (c) travel cash advances;
   (d) daily allowance (per diem); and
   (e) cash claims (out-of-pocket reimbursements).

(2) All travel payments and acquittals must be managed through the travel and expense management system.

(3) A corporate credit card must be used to pay for all University travel expenses, where feasible. Travellers who do not hold a corporate credit card should book and pay for airfares, accommodation and car rental through the University’s TMC.
   (a) The TMC will charge the bookings through a central billing account that is integrated with the travel and expense management system.
   (b) Travellers must then directly acquit the expenses incurred in the travel and expense management system.

(4) Expenses that cannot be paid by corporate credit card or the TMC should be paid personally by the traveller and included in the travel acquittal as a cash claim (out-of-pocket reimbursement), in accordance with clause 31.

(5) Travellers must indicate on their travel request whether they are requesting a daily allowance (per diem) or travelling on expenses.
16 Travel cash advances

(1) A travel cash advance can be obtained in appropriate circumstances, such as:
   (a) for travel to remote locations where a credit card cannot be used; or
   (b) for travellers who do not hold a corporate credit card.

(2) Travellers should request cash advances, and have them approved, through the travel and expense management system at least 10 working days prior to departure.

(3) All prior cash advances must be acquitted before any further cash advances are approved.

(4) Travel cash advances will be paid directly to the traveller’s nominated bank account through the travel and expense management system.

17 Daily allowance (per diem)

(1) The use of a daily allowance (per diem) must be approved in accordance with subclauses 14(4) and (5) of the policy.

(2) Daily allowance rates include the cost of all meals, beverages and incidental travel costs including:
   (a) airport trolley hire;
   (b) car parking;
   (c) cold and flu remedies and minor first aid items;
   (d) gratuities and tipping;
   (e) laundry and dry cleaning;
   (f) magazines and newspapers;
   (g) private telephone calls;
   (h) public transport;
   (i) taxis and other transport suppliers for small distance local travel.

(3) Travellers claiming a daily allowance are not entitled to any additional claim for meals or any other incidental expenses.

(4) A daily allowance must be claimed in the travel and expense management system.

(5) Daily allowance rates are subject to change from time to time.

   Note: Refer to the travel intranet site for per diem allowance rates.

(6) Daily allowances (per diem) are only available for each completed night of travel.

18 Camping daily allowance (per diem)

Travellers claiming a camping daily allowance (per diem) are not entitled to any additional claim for accommodation, meals or incidental travel costs.

   Note: Refer to the travel intranet site for per diem allowance rates.
19 Personal expenses

(1) Travellers must not charge or claim personal or private expenses to the University.

(2) Corporate credit card holders must not use a corporate credit card to pay for personal or private expenses.

(3) Where combined personal and business costs cannot be paid separately, they should be paid personally and the business component claimed as reimbursement of expenses.

(4) Where the private component of the trip is greater than or equal to 30% of the total days away (see clause 14), the following payment methods can be used, listed in order of preference:

   (a) The traveller pays 50% of the airfare personally with the remaining 50% paid by the University. All private costs are to be paid personally by the traveller.

   (b) The University pays 100% of the airfare and the traveller pays the University 50% at the time of booking. All private costs are to be paid personally by the traveller.

   (c) The traveller pays 100% of the airfare personally and seeks reimbursement of 50% from the University. All private costs are to be paid personally by the traveller.

(5) An FBT liability will arise when a spouse, partner or dependant accompanies an employee on work-related travel and expenses incurred by the spouse, partner or dependant are met by the University. FBT may have personal tax implications for a benefiting employee.

Note: Refer to clause 13 of the policy and the Tax – FBT Guide for additional information.

20 Managing identified travel risks

(1) Matters to be taken into account when considering the overall risk associated with travel include, but are not limited to:

   (a) destinations;

   (b) modes of transport;

   (c) work or study activities to be undertaken; and

   (d) individual characteristics of the traveller.

(2) If the destination is identified as “high risk” or “very high risk” the traveller must complete a travel risk assessment and attach it to their travel request.

(3) If the travel involves fieldwork, the traveller must attach a copy of the Fieldwork Safety Plan to their travel request.

Note: Refer to Fieldwork Safety Standards.

21 Managing risks associated with travel destinations

(1) Except for travel to remote areas, domestic travel is classified as low risk. Travel to remote areas is classified as high risk.

(2) To identify the risks associated with international travel to specific destinations, travellers must:
(a) review the official DFAT travel advisory on the smartraveller website and subscribe for email updates; and

(b) review the travel advisories provided by RiskLine.

(3) The traveller must address the key risks identified in the travel advisories in their travel risk assessment for travel to “high risk” and “very high risk” destinations.

(4) The approval to travel is subject to review if the relevant travel advisory changes prior to departure.

Note: Travel advisories provide basic information about visa and other entry and exit conditions, local travel options, laws, customs and health risks including food, water and vaccinations. The independent advisories also provide security information about crime, terrorism, political stability and corruption.

(5) Prior to departure, the traveller must register their travel itinerary with DFAT on the smartraveller website.

22 Managing risks associated with work or study activities

(1) The risk associated with the planned work or study activities must be assessed in accordance with the Work Health and Safety Procedures 2016.

(2) Attending business meetings or conferences is classified as low risk.

(3) Common activities that may require further assessment include, but are not limited to:

(a) fieldwork;
(b) clinical work;
(c) working with animals;
(d) active laboratory work;
(e) working with heavy plant and equipment; and
(f) working with people in the community.

Note: Refer to the Work Health and Safety Procedures 2016.

(4) When unsure, travellers and their managers should seek advice from their WHS Advisor or Safety Health and Wellbeing.

(5) Matters to be taken into account when considering the characteristics of the traveller include, but are not limited to:

(a) general travel experience of the traveller;
(b) any recent experiences travelling to the planned destination of which the person considering the risk is aware;
(c) the traveller’s experience and skill in the planned activities;
(d) the traveller’s health, including vaccination status;
(e) any relevant cultural, religious or communal sensitivities of the destination; and
(f) the traveller’s linguistic and cultural competence.
Reasonable allowances should be made for staff and students to travel to a high risk destination, if it is their place of origin and they have established support networks there.

23 Insurance

(1) Before travelling, travellers should:
   (a) visit the Internal Audit website; and
   (b) read the travel insurance certificate document and the AIG policy.

   **Note:** These documents include key information about insurance coverage and what to do in the event of an emergency or travel insurance claim.

(2) Travellers should have a copy of the travel insurance certificate document with them for the duration of their trip.

(3) Insurance for travel to “high risk” and “very high risk” destinations may be limited. In this instance, travel insurance must be confirmed with Internal Audit prior to approval or travel.

(4) Travellers taking approved leave before, during or after the University approved travel must purchase their own travel insurance for the private component of the travel.
   (a) The University’s travel insurance will cover personal travel on weekends in between business travel days.

(5) Travellers wishing to make an insurance claim should:
   (a) complete the travel claim form available on the Internal Audit website, either during or after completing their trip; and
   (b) submit the form to Internal Audit along with any relevant supporting documents.

   **Note:** Travellers who contact the insurer using the emergency number may, depending on the circumstances, have their claim managed directly by the insurer during their trip.

(6) Travellers with any insurance questions should contact Internal Audit.

24 Passports and visas

(1) Travellers are responsible for ensuring that they have a valid passport which is not due to expire within six months of the end of the travel.
   (a) Passport costs are a personal expense of the traveller.

(2) Travellers are responsible for arranging all necessary visa and work permits to meet the requirements of all countries they are visiting, transiting through or working in.
   (a) Costs of visas and work permits for business travel are allowable University expenses.

25 Health and vaccinations
(1) Travellers are responsible for assessing their own fitness to travel and obtaining the necessary vaccinations.

(2) Cost of vaccinations required for specific travel destinations included in the business travel, other than for vaccinations listed in the National Immunisation Program Schedule, are allowable University expenses.

26 Communication plans while travelling

(1) Travellers with University mobile phones are responsible for setting up the appropriate mobile phone call and data plan prior to travelling.

(2) Any excess usage communication costs will be considered a personal cost to the traveller.

PART 2 DURING TRAVEL

27 Emergencies

(1) Travellers should be aware of, and have access to, the insurer emergency contact information provided in the travel insurance certificate.

(2) In the event of an emergency, travellers:
   (a) must immediately contact the University’s travel assistance provider, who will assist the traveller and notify University management; and
   (b) are authorised to take reasonable steps to protect their safety and the safety of those travelling with them.

(3) Travellers must return home or travel to a safe location if instructed to by the travel assistance provider, the University or Australian consular services.

(4) Upon becoming aware of a significant dangerous world event, Safety Health & Wellbeing will:
   (a) identify potentially affected travellers through the TMC and communication systems;
   (b) to the extent reasonably possible, make contact with affected travellers and their managers;
   (c) request that travellers:
      (i) confirm their status;
      (ii) register their current location with the University’s travel assistance provider and Australian consular services;
      (iii) seek assistance from the University’s travel assistance provider as necessary; and
   (d) keep senior management advised of the situation.
28 Documentation

(1) Travellers must retain original travel documentation necessary to:
   (a) support their claims;
   (b) meet taxation requirements (corporate and personal); and
   (c) meet requirements for grant reporting and audit reviews.

(2) Images of travel documentation including receipts and tax invoices can be uploaded into the travel and expense management system.
   (a) After all the travel approvals and payments have been finalised in the travel and expense management system, the University does not require the traveller to retain the original documentation.

PART 3 AFTER TRAVEL

29 Acquittal process

Within one month of their return, travellers must use the travel management system to:

(a) acquit:
   (i) any corporate credit card transactions, against the approved travel budget; and
   (ii) any cash advance; and

(b) request reimbursements for any cash claims (out-of-pocket reimbursements).

30 Travel cash advances

(1) To acquit cash advances in the travel and expense management system, a traveller must:
   (a) create an Expense Report and assign the cash advance to it;
   (b) assign any unused cash advance amount to the expense type "cash advance return";
   (c) acquit any corporate credit card transactions and request any out-of-pocket reimbursements at this time through the same Expense Report;
   (d) upload and attach tax invoices, or if no tax invoice is available, a lost or unobtainable receipts declaration within the travel and expense management system; and
   (e) submit the Expense Report and attachments for online approval through the travel and expense management system.

(2) On return, unspent funds from a travel cash advance must be deposited to the University bank account using the 'Payments to the University' system and entered as a Cash Advance Return when submitting an Expense Report in the travel and expense management system.
(3) If the acquittal of a travel cash advance results in money owing to the traveller, a cash claim will be generated automatically in the travel and expense management system.

31 Cash claims (out-of-pocket reimbursements)

(1) Travellers should claim reimbursement for travel-related expenses, and have them approved, through the travel and expense management system.

(2) In the travel and expense management system, the traveller must:
   (a) create an Expense Report for the amount of the out-of-pocket expense, and allocate the transaction to an expense type, cost centre and fund;
   (b) acquit any corporate credit card transactions and cash advances in the same Expense Report;
   (c) upload and attach tax invoices or, if no tax invoice is available, a lost or unobtainable receipts declaration within the travel and expense management system; and
   (d) submit the Expense Report and attachments for online approval in the travel and expense management system.

32 Travel expense approver responsibilities

(1) Travel expense approvers must review the Expense Report in the travel and expense management system and are responsible for satisfying themselves that each expense was reasonably incurred.

   Note: refer to the Expense Approver Guidelines for details.

(2) In the travel expense management system, the travel expense approver must then either:
   (a) approve the Expense Report if the expenses seems reasonable; or
   (b) return the Expense Report to the traveller, along with a description of action required.

33 Rescissions and replacements

This document replaces the Travel Procedures, which commenced on 1 October 2008, which is rescinded as from the date of commencement of this document.

NOTES

Travel Procedures 2018

Date adopted: 11 December 2017
Date commenced: 1 January 2018
Date amended: 10 September 2019
Administrator: Director, Safety Health and Wellbeing in relation to clauses 20-23, 25 and 27
Chief Procurement Officer in relation to the remainder of the procedures.

Review date: 11 December 2022

Related documents:
University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority – Administrative Functions) Rule 2016
Code of Conduct – Staff and Affiliates
Code of Conduct - Students
Procurement Policy 2019
Special Studies Program Policy 2015
Travel Policy 2018
Visa and Work Rights Policy
Work Health and Safety Policy
Non-allowable Expense Procedures 2018

AMENDMENT HISTORY

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SCHEDULE ONE

Summary of travel booking process

University Traveller

International Travel

Finalise and Submit Travel Request
before holding of booking expires

Travel Requisition
Approved by travel approver

Ticket issued by Travel Partner

OBT = online booking tool